

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 620

By Jernigan

A RESOLUTION to honor the Master Gardeners of Davidson County for its exemplary service to Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this legislative body specially recognize those exemplary organizations that are comprised of concerned citizens who are dedicated to improving the quality of life in their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable organization is the Master Gardeners of Davidson County, which is celebrating its thirtieth anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County is the oldest Master Gardener association in Tennessee, formed in 1986, when fifty residents of Davidson and Williamson counties enrolled in the first Master Gardener program in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, since 1986, more than 3,000 Tennesseans have enrolled in the Master Gardener program in Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County is affiliated with the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Program administered by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and supports the activities of University of Tennessee (UT)/Tennessee State University (TSU) Extension in Davidson County and Middle Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Master Gardeners of Davidson County is to promote gardening and home horticulture through education, environmental stewardship, and volunteerism; and

WHEREAS, volunteers must complete a fourteen-week course administered by the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener Program and UT/TSU Extension, contribute forty hours of community service, and commit to eight hours of continuing education to become a Certified

Master Gardener; each year afterward, volunteers must contribute a minimum of twenty-five hours of community service and complete eight hours of continuing education; and

WHEREAS, each year, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County contributes an average of 10,000 hours of community service; in 2015, Master Gardener volunteers contributed over 10,780 volunteer hours in service to communities across Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County manages four educational and historic garden sites through collaborative partnerships across Nashville: Grassmere Historic Gardens at the Nashville Zoo, Harding Garden at Belle Meade Plantation, Historic Nashville City Cemetery, and the Kitchen Gardens at Andrew Jackson's Hermitage; these historic gardens are unique for their commitment to restoring and re-creating period gardening using heirloom varieties of flowers, fruits, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County also manages its 8,800-square-foot Demonstration Garden at Ellington Agricultural Center, a green learning space that features many teaching areas to demonstrate a wide variety of topics and gardening methods and techniques; and

WHEREAS, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County conducts educational outreach programs at the Nashville Farmers' Market, Nashville Lawn and Garden Show, Tennessee State Fair, and Music and Molasses hosted by the Tennessee Agricultural Museum; and

WHEREAS, each summer, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County offers a weeklong Junior Master Gardener Camp for youths ages nine through fourteen, providing opportunities for classroom and practical hands-on learning; and

WHEREAS, in partnership with the Nashville Public Library Seed Exchange, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County offers a series of free workshops annually to the community on do-it-yourself gardening topics; and

WHEREAS, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County is an organizing partner of the Sow Nashville initiative as an advocate and a resource for community gardening throughout Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, since 2009, the Master Gardeners of Davidson County has hosted the Urban Gardening Festival amid its Demonstration Garden, a free community event inviting the public to learn about gardening and engage with local artisans, exhibitors, growers, markets, nonprofits, producers, and state and local government agencies from across the greater Nashville and Middle Tennessee region; and

WHEREAS, the volunteers of Master Gardeners of Davidson County are wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that earned Tennessee recognition as the Volunteer State, and they should be especially recognized on the occasion of the organization's thirtieth anniversary; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend the Master Gardeners of Davidson County for its ongoing commitment to promoting gardening and home horticulture among all interested citizens and volunteerism and public service as a way of life, as we recognize its thirtieth anniversary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.